Weekly Compilation of

Presidential Documents

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Editor's Note: The President was at Camp David, MD, on January 16, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, January 16, 2004

Proclamation 7749—National Mentoring Month, 2004

January 9, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Mentoring reflects the great strength of America—the heart and soul of the American people. During National Mentoring Month, we recognize the dedicated individuals who volunteer their time to mentor young people, and we encourage more citizens to give back to their communities as mentors.

Mentors are friends, teachers, and role models. They open doors of opportunity, convey values, and help provide the stability and encouragement that young people need to succeed. By spending time with a child and showing compassion and guidance, a mentor can profoundly affect a young life. Research shows that adolescents who have an adult mentor are far less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors. Mentoring relationships create continuing cycles of hope and promise, as they not only provide positive influences for individual children, but also strengthen families and communities.

My Administration is working to expand mentoring and other volunteer activities across America. Through the USA Freedom Corps, we are promoting volunteer service and offering our citizens more opportunities to help others. We are also supporting faith-based and community organizations, including many who sponsor mentoring programs. In total, more than 63 million Americans volunteered in their communities over the past year—approximately 4 million more than the previous year.

The Department of Education will use Federal funds to work with national youth-serving organizations, independent community groups, and local education agencies to develop, expand, and strengthen school-based mentoring programs for disadvantaged middle school students. In addition, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Justice, and other agencies will offer grants to help youth-serving organizations recruit and train adult mentors for nearly 100,000 children whose parents are incarcerated.

These efforts are an important part of our ongoing work to ensure that every child can realize the great promise of America. Every life has value and potential, and all deserve the opportunity to have a bright future. By supporting the individuals and organizations involved in mentoring and by encouraging more citizens to participate in their good works, we can transform America, one heart and one soul at a time.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 2004 as National Mentoring Month. I call upon the people of the United States to recognize the importance of mentoring, to look for opportunities to serve as mentors in their communities, and to celebrate this month with appropriate activities and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:09 a.m., January 13, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on January 14. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

January 10, 2004

Good morning. As the year 2004 begins, America's economy is strong and getting stronger. More Americans than ever own their own homes. More businesses are investing. More manufacturers are seeing increased activity than at any time in the last 20 years. Stock market wealth has increased by more than $3 trillion over the past year. And over the past 5 months, more than a quarter-million Americans started work at new jobs. In December, the unemployment rate fell to 5.7 percent, from a high of 6.3 percent last June.

This latest report underscores a choice about the future of our economy and the future of those who are looking for work. We can continue on the path to prosperity and new jobs, a path marked by a progrowth agenda that has cut taxes on paychecks for 109 million American taxpayers, or we can reverse the course by raising taxes on hard-working Americans. The choice is clear. Tax relief has got this economy going again, and tax relief will keep it moving forward.

In my budget for the upcoming fiscal year, I will call on Congress to make permanent all the tax relief we have delivered to the American people and our Nation's small businesses. If Congress fails to act, this tax relief will disappear, and millions of American families and small businesses would see tax hikes starting in 2005. For the sake of our economic expansion and for the sake of millions of Americans who depend on small businesses for their jobs, we need Congress to act and to make tax relief permanent.

Every American who pays income taxes got a tax cut. They should keep that tax cut in the future. American families saw the child credit double to $1,000 per child. They should keep that higher credit. American investors, including millions of seniors, saw taxes fall on dividend income and investment gains. They should keep that tax relief. American small businesses received new tax incentives to invest in equipment and software. They should keep those incentives. Every American family, including every farmer, rancher, and small-business owner, will see the death tax disappear in 2010, then reappear in 2011. But the death tax should stay buried.

Now is not the time to turn our backs on America's families and workers and entrepreneurs by letting much-needed tax relief expire. Making tax relief permanent is a simple step that would keep our economy growing so that every American who wants to work can find a job.

We must continue to take other steps to promote growth and job creation throughout our economy. We must promote free and fair trade, reform our class action system, and help businesses and their employees address the problem of rising health care costs.

To serve the economic needs of our country, we must also reform our immigration laws. Reform must begin by confronting a basic fact of life and economics: Some of the jobs being generated in America's growing economy are jobs American citizens are not filling. This past week, I proposed a new temporary-worker program that would match willing foreign workers with willing American employers when no Americans can be found to fill the jobs. If an American employer is offering a job that American citizens are not willing to take, we ought to welcome into our country a person who will fill that job.

This temporary-worker program represents the best tradition of our society. It will help strengthen our economy, return order to our immigration system, and secure our homeland.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:54 a.m. on January 9 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

The President's News Conference With President Vicente Fox of Mexico in Monterrey, Mexico

January 12, 2004

President Fox. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. President Bush, welcome to

Mexico, and welcome to Monterrey. We receive you with great enthusiasm, the way we are receiving the leaders of the countries of America. We have great expectations in order to work in this extraordinary Summit of the Americas.

In order to know each other better—all of us leaders that have responsibilities in America—it's best to analyze extraordinary matters that have been brought about in the last few years, since the last meeting of the Americas. While checking and making a revision on these matters, we can give broad solutions to the problems—economic and poverty problems in a great part of the continent; perhaps solutions to the problems of human capital, social capital in our respective countries; and likewise deal, as we have been doing in every single meeting, the safety and security matters, going deep inside the problems of corruption, making sure that in our countries, democracy should be there and the state of law should be there. So this meeting will enable us to give steps forward in all these multilateral topics.

Likewise, we have had a bilateral meeting—and I will mention this later on, a couple of matters, important matters in reference to this bilateral conversation. First of all, relating to the migration topic, President Bush has given us in full detail and has told us once again the proposal made in the United States for the migration matters and the policy that should be checked upon that—that topic. It's a sovereign matter of the United States.

Consequently, this migration proposal is analyzed according to the different conversations that President Bush and President Fox, myself, even when he was a Governor in the State of Texas and I was a Governor in the State of Guanajuato. Since that time, we have been touching upon this subject, and we did that in the first meeting in Rancho San Cristobal in the State of Guanajuato. We did it once again, and we spoke about migration. We have been doing this in each one of the different meetings.

So I would like to give full acknowledgement that part of the conversations, a great part of the conversations have been collected and analyzed. But this is a proposal made by the President of the United States. We totally agree and are aware that the proposal should be discussed, broadly discussed, analyzed, particularly in the Congress of the United States. Consequently, we should give full time so that the idea—well, the idea should mature, and it should definitely be approved.

So for us in Mexico, this is a very important step forward on what has to do with the relationship between the two countries, on what has to do with the migration flow. It is a topic with a great priority for our countries, for both countries. This proposal opens an opportunity to have a certain movement, a certain situation, important for many millions of Mexicans. It is a priority. It is a valuable proposal, and by all means, it will have to do with the improvement of the situation of these migrants, but it will have to do as well with the strengthening of our respective economies—that on the one hand.

On the other, the topic that we have been dealing with is the initiative of North America, by means of which both Governments want to work with very specific objectives, so as to create a greater economic growth, increase productivity and competitiveness within the region through the reduction of costs, and facilitating trade flows, promoting development of common markets in different specific sectors. And it has as an objective to establish a security regional framework protecting Mexico, the United States, and Canada from terrorism.

Several tables, working tables, analyze the normalization of different standards within the market in automobiles, food, agriculture products, construction materials, and consumption goods. Likewise, there's a table that has to do with trade and services. Another one is working on energy; another one in scientific and technological cooperation; another one, regional cooperation on trade and investment. Consequently, it is a great effort so as to achieve the objectives that I just mentioned.

President Bush, once again, thank you for visiting us. Thank you for being here. This summit, this meeting, will allow us to be near the different Presidents, the different leaders

of Latin America, the Caribbean area, Central America, and by all means North America. And it will be for the good of this continent in the future. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. President. Laura and I are—really appreciate your hospitality. We want to thank you and Marta for being our friends. I remember well our visit to your ranch. And to this end, we would like to extend an invitation to both you and the First Lady of Mexico to visit our ranch on March the 5th and 6th. I hope you can find—I hope it's a convenient date for you on your calendar because we'd love to—we'd love to have you there.

The bonds of friendship and shared values between our two nations are strong. We have worked together to overcome many mutual challenges, and that work is yielding results. Today, Mexico is America's second largest trading partner, and we are Mexico's largest. Every day, thousands of Americans and Mexicans cross the border in both directions for reason of commerce and tourism. And many Americans settle—many Mexicans settle in America, bringing with them optimism and a strong desire to succeed. They come to fulfill their dreams, and in the process they enrich our Nation.

Last week, I proposed a new temporary-worker program that will help further the cause of safe, legal, and orderly migration. This temporary-worker program will match willing foreign workers with willing American employers when no Americans can be found to fill the jobs. Under this program, undocumented workers currently in the United States will be able to come out of the shadows and establish legal identities. All participants in the program will be issued a temporary-worker card that will allow them to travel back and forth between their home and the United States without fear of being denied reentry into our country.

This plan is not amnesty, placing undocumented workers on the automatic path of citizenship. I oppose amnesty because it encourages the violation of our laws and perpetuates illegal immigration. My proposal expects that most temporary workers will eventually return permanently to their home countries when the period of work that I will be negotiating with the Congress has expired. And I think it's important to give financial incentives to those workers in order for them to make the decision to return home permanently.

I'll work with President Fox and other leaders on a plan to give temporary workers credit in their home countries' retirement systems for the time they worked in the United States. I support making it easier for temporary workers to contribute a portion of their earnings to tax-preferred savings accounts, money they can collect as they return to their native countries.

Under this program, the United States will benefit from the honest labor of foreign workers. Our neighbors will benefit as productive citizens return home with money to invest and to spend in their own nation's economy. This program will be more humane, humane to workers, and will live up to the highest ideals of our nations.

While my Nation benefits from the dreams that newcomers bring to America, I believe that people should be better able to achieve their dreams at their own home. The best way in the long term to reduce the pressures that create illegal immigration is to expand economic opportunity in countries at both ends of an immigrant's journey. This is why President Fox and I are committed to free and fair trade. We've seen it lift both our nations and our economies. Since 1994, trade between our two countries has grown from $100 billion to $232 billion. We will continue to work together and with Canada to enhance North American prosperity and security.

We're also working to reduce the cost of sending money home to families and local communities. These remittances exceed $10 billion per year. But the cost of such transfers reduces the amount of money that hard-working people can return to their families. Our two countries have made it a priority to keep hard-earned money in the hands of those who need it most. In recent years, our efforts under our U.S.-Mexico Partnership for Prosperity Initiative have reduced the cost of remittances by almost 60 percent.

Two years ago, in this city, world leaders agreed on a vision to expand opportunity and spread prosperity throughout the hemisphere. With this year's Special Summit, we continue to put that vision into action.

Through the Inter-American Development Bank, we are expanding access to credit for small-business entrepreneurs, the key engines of growth and job creation for any nation's economy. We're helping nations improve their legal systems to protect property rights so that owners can use their property as collateral to finance the purchase of a home or to start a business. We're investing in the health and education of our peoples, and we're intensifying our common fight against corruption.

President Fox and I will also continue our efforts to support democracy in the region. We will work with the Organization of American States to ensure the integrity of the Presidential recall and referendum process underway in Venezuela. And as part of our effort to protect the institutions of democracy in Bolivia, we will cochair the initial meeting of the Bolivia Support Group in Washington this coming Friday.

Our bilateral relationship is strong. This summit's agenda is full. The United States will continue to work with our friends in the neighborhood in a spirit of common purpose and mutual respect.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Temporary-Worker Program/Airport Security

Q. Question for both of you. President Fox, once more on migrating matters, what else did the Mexican Government propose? What else can we expect for the Mexican workers? Can we aspire the same treatment of the Canadian ones without any approaches? What are the purposes in reference to migrants? Does this have election purposes? And will the United States avoid violating the human rights in our airports? What is the question, and the question is addressed for both Presidents. Thank you.

President Fox. First of all, I would like to say, what else can we wish? What we want is the plan presented by President Bush. We hope that the plan has a happy ending, through the political process that should be followed within the United States so that it can be approved in the Congress of the United States.

I would say that this is what we want. The plan, as it was mentioned before, is a very important step forward for many Mexican workers in the United States. Those that have the direct benefit of this will recognize and acknowledge this proposal that has a great importance for them. Not only—not only because they can see that their labor rights and their human rights are completely respected there but there is a human face on this proposal, a human face that has to do with the families of these workers. Consequently, for us it is a plan that meets the demands and its measures. And our will should be to support the plan to be achieved and go on.

In reference to safety matters on the airports and the flights, that is a sovereign decision in Mexico to implement these safety and security programs within the airports and within the Mexican airlines. So we are not violating any human right of any sort of citizen. What we're doing is paying special attention so as to avoid terrorist acts, violent acts within the Mexican territory or within the Mexican airlines.

And in this same approach, we mention that there's no direct intervention of no official personnel, policemen, agents—direct intervention, direct participation in operations that have to do with the assurance of this task within the Mexican airports or within the Mexican airlines. What we do have is a participation and an exchange with the personnel, the liaison personnel, the link personnel for security. We exchange information so as to do our work much better.

We reject any other sort of information, different information that has been brought about that in these activities—well, we can state that only Mexican personnel participates, agents of the airlines or agents of security here in Mexico. Thus, there is no intervention in the direct operation of any other official agent from abroad. It is the liaison officers, the link offices; we exchange information the way we agreed upon with President Bush since the beginning of our conversations in Rancho San Cristobal.

And we have a mutual trust—that's the way we started—so that the security and safety institutions would trust each other, they could have an exchange of information, and they could be very, very efficient in their work. Never, never before had we reached efficiency level fighting organized crime,

guaranteeing the security and safety of the different passengers, stopping, let's say, loads of drug, drug trafficking the way we have been achieving this in the last few years, based upon mutual trust and based on this coordinated work between the two parts.

President Bush. Mr. President, I appreciate your wonderful cooperation that we've achieved between our two countries. You've just articulated that level of cooperation in a way that I don't think I ever could. So that's my answer to the second question you asked.

My answer to the first question you asked is that I proposed this change in immigration law because I think it is the right thing to do. It recognizes the reality of our country. The President and I talked about whether or not—the ramifications of this initiative to Mexico. But the migration policy applies to all foreign workers. But the truth of the matter is, the vast majority of foreign workers in America are from Mexico. We know that in Texas very well. And I repeat to you that this is—these workers are a benefit to my country. These are hard-working, decent, honorable people that are in our country because—to fill jobs that others won't take, on the one hand, and also to make a living, to put money—to get money and to send money back to their families. There is a deep human desire for a mother or a father to provide for his or her family. And that's how I view the motivations of good, decent Mexican citizens working in our country.

And it seems like to me, it makes sense to have laws that treat people with respect. We are a country of law. Rule of law is important in America. And therefore, we ought to not have a system that is based upon a undocumented underclass but a system that is based upon law.

And so I—you said something about politics—yes, there's politics involved. But the reason I made—and there will be politics probably involved in whether or not it passes Congress. But the reason I proposed the initiative is because it is the right thing for America to do.

Iraq

Q. Thank you, Mr. President, President Fox. My question is about Iraq. The death toll in Iraq, the American death toll, is approaching 500. I wonder whether you have any reservations now about whether that toll is worth it to achieve your objectives in Iraq and the Middle East.

President Fox, you had a disagreement with the President going into the war. I wonder whether you aired that out during your meeting just now, whether you now see eye-to-eye on postwar Iraq. Thank you.

President Bush. A democratic, free Iraq is in the national interests of our country. A free country in the midst of the Middle East will make America more secure and, matter of fact, make any country more secure. And the decision I made was a tough decision.

We've had discussions prior to the decision and after the decision. Vicente Fox is a good enough friend for him to be able to express his opinion to me without the loss of friendship, and he didn't agree with the decision I made. But the decision I made was the right one for America, and history will prove it's the right one for the world. And we will stay the course until the job is done.

And the job is getting done. Iraq is more free every day. The citizens are beginning—the lives of the citizens are improving every day. And one thing is for certain, there won't be any more mass graves and torture rooms and rape rooms. The tyrant will no longer come back to threaten the Iraqi people. These people will be able to live in—these Iraqi citizens will not only be able to live in a free society; they'll be able to live in a society that is free from one of the most brutal dictators in the world's history.

President Fox. As a democratic nation, to meet the challenge of terrorism, to make sure that terrorism is eradicated from the face of this world—that's our challenge today, and that's what we work on. It is why we congratulate the U.S. Government that they withheld Saddam Hussein, and he will be taken to trial, to judgment. We fully support that, and we congratulate President Bush and the United States for that very important accomplishment, which is for the better of all nations, all families, all people in the world that would want to live in peace without terrorism.

Free Trade Agreements

Q. Good afternoon. My question is addressed for both Presidents, if you can really talk about a free trade agreement—[*inaudible*]—North America, between Mexico, United States, and Canada, in the midst of all the problems of commercial exchange such as transportation, food, agricultural sector. Second question: Can you achieve a free trade agreement of the Americas with the opposition of many countries such as Brazil and Venezuela?

President Fox. Well, in the case of a Free Trade Agreement of North America, we have clearly pointed out many a time that it has been successful for Mexico. We are very much satisfied with what has been achieved in the last 10 years. Mexico is the ninth economy in the world. It has enabled Mexico to have the size of the seventh power for exports in the world and a per capita income going beyond, let's say, $6,000, the highest in Latin America. These are things that have been brought about because of this relation that has been established. And we have worked upon that for 10 years.

I read a report of the ILO about Latin America and unemployment and wages and salaries of the different workers. And Mexico has the best, let's say, rate on unemployment in Latin America, improving the situation, improving the actual wages of the workers in Latin America—the only one in Latin America. And by all means, this is coming from the free trade agreements. Consequently, we are satisfied with the free trade agreement, and it should continue operating and working with success.

On a parallel basis, we have thought about the Initiative of North America to thrust and develop our economies much more, achieving competitiveness and productivity, generating jobs and quality of life in our respective countries. It is a parallel, an additional pathway.

And as President Bush already mentioned in reference to the Association for Prosperity—the document known as Partnership For Prosperity, that's the name of the document—it has many—[*inaudible*]—we work day by day so as to thrust and improve the document. So we're giving steps forward in this direction—that on the one hand.

On the other, as a consequence of this, Mexico is a passionate promoter of the free trade agreements in the Americas. We are totally in favor of the free trade agreement for the American Continent, by all means. And we're working in favor and working actively so that it will be achieved as soon as possible. We received with great satisfaction the results of the last meeting in Miami, Florida, where the agreement is to continue building this free trade agreement so as to have it ready on the foreseen dates that we thought about. So we are working enthusiastically in this field.

By all means, we do not only want a free trade agreement, but we want a very good free trade agreement, an agreement with quality and that has to do with trade that would take development to the less developed countries, the poorest countries in our continent, that could take development to the different regions where there's greater poverty in our continent. And that is the fundamental purpose of this agreement.

Trade promotes development, undoubtedly. Trade undoubtedly promotes the reduction of poverty. And trade and relations amongst countries promote human capital. So we are absolutely in favor of trusting and supporting this agreement.

President Bush. It's helped America; it's helped Mexico; it's helped Canada. I think we need to move the process forward—the President and I discussed that earlier today—with the North American Initiative.

The President is absolutely right. The best way to eradicate poverty is to encourage trade between nations. Trade gives people hope and provides opportunity. Obviously, that must be coupled with anticorruption measures, like the President has done here in Mexico. It must be coupled with good education measures. At this meeting, we're going to talk about ways to get capital into the hands of the entrepreneurial classes of respective countries. But without trade, there's going to be—it's going to be hard for some people to find opportunity.

And so I hope those who have expressed some opposition about the free trade agreement of the Americas, look at the facts. And the fact is that NAFTA has lifted lives and ended poverty in some parts of our—in our

neighborhood. And to this end, the United States will not only push for the free trade agreement of the Americas; we will continue trade agreements with countries like Chile—we just concluded one with Chile—but with the Central American countries, Andean countries. We believe in trade. We believe it's in the interest of the neighborhood that we trade freely.

Paul O'Neill

Q. Thank you, President Fox. President Bush, is it true, as your former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill says, that you started planning for the invasion of Iraq within days of your inauguration? Do you feel betrayed? And should he have released those documents?

President Bush. First, let me say I appreciate former Secretary O'Neill's service to our country. We worked together during some difficult times. We worked together when the country was in recession, and now we're coming out of recession, which is positive news. We worked together when America was attacked on September the 11th, which changed how I viewed the world. September the 11th made me realize that America was no longer protected by oceans and we had to take threats very seriously, no matter where they may be materializing.

And no, the stated policy of my administration towards Saddam Hussein was very clear. Like the previous administration, we were for regime change. And in the initial stages of the administration, as you might remember, we were dealing with Desert Badger or fly-overs and fly-betweens and looks, and so we were fashioning policy along those lines. And then, all of a sudden, September the 11th hit. And as the President of the United States, my most solemn obligation is to protect the security of the American people. That's my—to me that's the most solemn thing an American President or any President must do. And I took that duty very seriously.

And as you know, not only did we deal with the Taliban, we gave—working through the United Nations and working through international community, we made it clear that Saddam Hussein should disarm. And like he had done with a lot of previous resolutions, he ignored the world's demands. And now he's no longer in power, and the world is better for it. The Iraqi people are better for it; America is better for it; Mexico is better for it. The world is more peaceful as a result of Saddam Hussein not being in power.

And the task at hand, Mr. President—and he and I—he knows this fully well—is to make sure that the aspirations of the Iraqi people are allowed to flourish. And we'll get there. It's a tough task right now. It's hard work, but we've done hard work in the past. And a free Iraq is going to be in the world's interest.

Thank you very much.

President Fox. Thank you, Mr. President. Good afternoon.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:12 p.m. at the Quinta Real Hotel. President Fox and some reporters spoke in Spanish, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Marta Sahagun de Fox, wife of President Fox; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Ricardo Lagos of Chile in Monterrey

January 12, 2004

President Bush. Listen, I'm honored to be here with *el Presidente de Chile,* Ricardo Lagos. Mr. President, thank you for your leadership and friendship. We have had a very close working relationship. And the people of the world should take notice of the fact that Chile and America negotiated and finalized a free trade agreement, a free trade agreement which is in the interests of the people of America and the people of Chile. It's an example of the bilateral trade relationships that my Government thinks is important.

But beyond that, we've got a relationship based upon shared values. The President is a strong leader who believes in human dignity and human rights and in freedom. And for that, Mr. President, I'm grateful for your strong voice here in our neighborhood. It's

good to see you again, sir. Thank you. You're looking good these days.

[*At this point, President Lagos spoke in Spanish, and no translation was provided. He then continued in English.*]

President Lagos. Your Spanish is improving. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Thank you. I appreciate that.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:23 p.m. at the InterContinental Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership With India

January 12, 2004

In November 2001, Prime Minister Vajpayee and I committed our countries to a strategic partnership. Since then, our two countries have strengthened bilateral cooperation significantly in several areas. Today we announce the next steps in implementing our shared vision.

The United States and India agree to expand cooperation in three specific areas: civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programs, and high-technology trade. In addition, we agree to expand our dialog on missile defense. Cooperation in these areas will deepen the ties of commerce and friendship between our two nations and will increase stability in Asia and beyond.

The proposed cooperation will progress through a series of reciprocal steps that will build on each other. It will include expanded engagement on nuclear regulatory and safety issues and missile defense, ways to enhance cooperation in peaceful uses of space technology, and steps to create the appropriate environment for successful high-technology commerce. In order to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, relevant laws, regulations, and procedures will be strengthened, and measures to increase bilateral and international cooperation in this area will be employed. These cooperative efforts will be undertaken in accordance with our respective national laws and international obligations.

The expanded cooperation launched today is an important milestone in transforming the relationship between the United States and India. That relationship is based increasingly on common values and common interests. We are working together to promote global peace and prosperity. We are partners in the war on terrorism, and we are partners in controlling the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them.

The vision of U.S.-India strategic partnership that Prime Minister Vajpayee and I share is now becoming a reality.

Proclamation 7750—To Suspend Entry as Immigrants or Nonimmigrants of Persons Engaged In or Benefiting From Corruption

January 12, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In light of the importance of legitimate and transparent public institutions to world stability, peace, and development, and the serious negative effects that corruption of public institutions has on the United States efforts to promote security and to strengthen democratic institutions and free market systems, and in light of the importance to the United States and the international community of fighting corruption, as evidenced by the Third Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity and other intergovernmental efforts, I have determined that it is in the interests of the United States to take action to restrict the international travel and to suspend the entry into the United States, as immigrants or nonimmigrants, of certain persons who have committed, participated in, or are beneficiaries of corruption in the performance of public functions where that corruption has serious adverse effects on international activity of U.S. businesses, U.S. foreign assistance goals, the security of the United States against transnational crime and terrorism, or the stability of democratic institutions and nations.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, 8 U.S.C. 1182(f), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, hereby find that the unrestricted immigrant and nonimmigrant entry into the United States of persons described in section 1 of this proclamation would, except as provided in sections 2 and 3 of this proclamation, be detrimental to the interests of the United States.

I therefore hereby proclaim that:

Section 1. The entry into the United States, as immigrants or nonimmigrants, of the following persons is hereby suspended:

(a) Public officials or former public officials whose solicitation or acceptance of any article of monetary value, or other benefit, in exchange for any act or omission in the performance of their public functions has or had serious adverse effects on the national interests of the United States.

(b) Persons whose provision of or offer to provide any article of monetary value or other benefit to any public official in exchange for any act or omission in the performance of such official's public functions has or had serious adverse effects on the national interests of the United States.

(c) Public officials or former public officials whose misappropriation of public funds or interference with the judicial, electoral, or other public processes has or had serious adverse effects on the national interests of the United States.

(d) The spouses, children, and dependent household members of persons described in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) above, who are beneficiaries of any articles of monetary value or other benefits obtained by such persons.

Sec. 2. Section 1 of this proclamation shall not apply with respect to any person otherwise covered by section 1 where entry of the person into the United States would not be contrary to the interests of the United States.

Sec. 3. Persons covered by sections 1 and 2 of this proclamation shall be identified by the Secretary of State or the Secretary's designee, in his or her sole discretion, pursuant to such standards and procedures as the Secretary may establish.

Sec. 4. For purposes of this proclamation, "serious adverse effects on the national interests of the United States" means serious adverse effects on the international economic activity of U.S. businesses, U.S. foreign assistance goals, the security of the United States against transnational crime and terrorism, or the stability of democratic institutions and nations.

Sec. 5. Nothing in this proclamation shall be construed to derogate from United States Government obligations under applicable international agreements.

Sec. 6. The Secretary of State shall have responsibility for implementing this proclamation pursuant to such procedures as the Secretary may, in the Secretary's discretion, establish.

Sec. 7. This proclamation is effective immediately.

Sec. 8. This proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party, against the United States, its departments, agencies, or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:09 a.m., January 13, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on January 14.

Remarks at the Inauguration Ceremony of the Special Summit of the Americas in Monterrey

January 12, 2004

Mr. President, I thank you for your wonderful hospitality. First Lady, thank you as well. Please thank the people of this gracious city for hosting such a distinguished group of leaders, spouses, citizens of the world.

Two years ago in this city, world leaders formed the Monterrey Consensus. We pledged to work for government that is responsive to the basic needs of every human being and for policies that promote opportunity for all. At this year's summit, we are embracing the challenge of implementing that consensus to bring all the hemisphere's people into an expanding circle of development.

To advance these goals, my Nation revolutionized the way we provide aid, and we substantially increased our aid to developing countries. Under our new Compact for Development, U.S. assistance is linked to good governments, investment in people, and economic freedom. Development assistance should light a path to reform and economic growth, rather than perpetuate the need for further aid.

The nations of this hemisphere must identify concrete steps to implement the noble ideas of the Monterrey Consensus. We must work to provide quality education and quality health care for all our citizens, especially for those suffering from HIV/AIDS. We must also chart a clear course toward a vibrant free market that will help lift people out of poverty and create a healthy middle class. We must increase the credit available to small businesses that generate the majority of jobs in all our economies and reduce the time that it takes to start a business. We must strengthen property rights so that land can be leveraged as a source of capital to start businesses or hire new workers. And we must lower the cost of sending money home to the families of hard-working men and women who are earning a living abroad.

Over the long term, trade is the most certain path to lasting prosperity. The openness of our market is the key driver of growth in the region and a testament to the United States' belief in the mutual benefits of trade. Last year, about 83 percent of Latin America's exports to the United States, roughly $176 billion worth of goods, entered my country duty-free. My country is committed to free and fair trade for this hemisphere through the Free Trade Area of the Americas and through the growing number of bilateral free trade agreements we have completed and are negotiating. Our NAFTA partners have been vital free trade allies for 10 years now.

Our free trade agreement with Chile entered into force on the first of this year. We're completing a free trade agreement with our Central American partners. This week we'll launch negotiations with the Dominican Republic, and soon we'll begin negotiations with Panama and some of our Andean friends. Once completed, these free trade agreements will cover more than two-thirds of the GDP of America's neighbors.

The essential foundations of prosperity and progress remain democracy and the rule of law. All nations must prevail in the fight against corruption. We must deny safe haven to corrupt officials and create a culture of transparency in the Americas. Today I signed a proclamation denying corrupt officials entry into my country. I urge other countries to take similar actions.

At past summits, we resolved that democracy is the only legitimate form of government in this hemisphere and that the peoples of the Americas have an obligation to promote it and defend it. Those governments in our hemisphere that have responded by supporting democracy can be proud. Our unity and support of democratic institutions, constitutional processes, and basic liberties gives hope and strength to those struggling to preserve their God-given rights, whether in Venezuela or Haiti or Bolivia.

And through our democratic example, we must continue to stand with the brave people of Cuba, who for nearly half a century have endured the tyrannies and repression. Dictatorship has no place in the Americas. We must all work for a rapid, peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba. Together we will succeed, because the spirit of liberty still thrives, even in the darkest corners of Castro's prisons.

We have great opportunities to work together to improve the quality of life for all the people of this hemisphere. To realize our common vision, we must set goals that are specific and measurable. In doing so, we will affirm our determination to succeed and to give hope to millions.

Together we will implement the Monterrey Consensus, lift all our nations, and show the world that free societies and

free markets can deliver real benefits to our citizens.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. at the Parque Fundidora. In his remarks, he referred to President Vicente Fox of Mexico and his wife, Marta Sahagun de Fox; and President Fidel Castro of Cuba.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Paul Martin of Canada and an Exchange With Reporters in Monterrey

January 13, 2004

President Bush. The Prime Minister and I just had a very constructive meeting. He's a straightforward fellow. He's easy to talk to. We talked about a lot of issues. We reaffirmed the important relationship between Canada and the United States. It's a vital relationship. It is a relationship that is important for a lot of reasons. The most important reason is that we share the same values of family and human dignity and treating people decently, and I really look forward to working with Prime Minister Martin.

Prime Minister Martin. Well, I can certainly say the same thing. We share a continent, and we share values, and we share a perspective on what's the best thing for our people. And essentially, working together is really the way we are going to do the best thing for our people.

We discussed a number of individual issues, and I think that we made a lot of progress. And so I feel very good about the meeting, and I feel very good about the relationship.

President Bush. We'll answer a couple, two questions a side. We'll start with Lindlaw [Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press].

Iraqi Reconstruction Contracts/Canada-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, thank you. Dr. Rice hinted last week that Canada might be considered in a new round of contracting for Iraq reconstruction. Where exactly does that stand?

And Mr. Prime Minister, you supported your predecessor's decision to abstain from the Iraq war. Is there any reason to think this relationship is going to thaw out now?

President Bush. That assumes there was a freeze. And I didn't feel there was. I understood why people disagreed with the decision I took.

Secondly, yes, when I talked to Prime Minister Martin on our first phone call, I told him that Canada would be given serious consideration for contracting. Here's the—what's going to happen is that, first of all, they've been very strong supporters of the Madrid Conference. They want Iraq to succeed. They want Iraq to be free. They understand the stakes with having a free country in the midst of the Middle East. And Canada right now is eligible for subcontracting bids in the first round of construction projects. In the second round, the second tranche of bidding, Canada will be eligible to bid.

Prime Minister Martin. Yes, essentially, I think that—and I think this really shows how it can work—we had a very good telephone conversation before Christmas, and that subsequently, our officials went to work, and that Canada will be eligible to bid on all of the construction contracts in the next tranche. And we will—at the same time, there are a whole bunch of non-construction contracts, service contracts that are coming out immediately in which we will be entitled to bid. And so I think that—that it actually does show that working together, you can arrive at a reasonable solution.

If you'll forgive me for a second, Mr. President, we have two languages in Canada.

[*At this point, the Prime Minister repeated his remarks in French.*]

President Bush. Do you want to call on a Canadian reporter?

Prime Minister Martin. Sure.

Mad Cow Disease

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us, given the mad cow crisis that's currently affecting both of our countries, how will you work with our Prime Minister to help resolve the issue?

President Bush. This is an issue that's going to require close coordination between our two countries. We've got a lot of beef going across our border. We've got beef on the hoof and beef in the box. And the cattle

industries are very important for our respective provinces and States. And the best way to make sure that we're able to satisfy the consumers in both our countries as well as around the world is, there ought to be very close coordination on regulation, on information, and on the science.

And I'm confident that we'll be able to assure those who buy Canadian and/or U.S. beef that the products they buy are safe. It's just going to require a very close coordination between our Secretaries of Agriculture, which we are committed to doing. As a matter of fact, they'll be meeting, I believe, sometime this week.

Prime Minister Martin. This is a North American industry, and the solutions are science-based. And those science-based solutions are going to be arrived at between the two of us, and that's where the coordination comes in.

President Bush. You know, I personally haven't stopped eating beef. I like to eat beef and will continue eating beef, because I believe the food supply is safe. But we fully understand that we will work together to make sure that we address as many concerns as possible in a scientifically based way.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Space Program

Q. Mr. President, thank you. Can America afford a major shift in the space program, to go back to the moon and then on to Mars?

President Bush. Yes, I'll be saying that tomorrow. Thank you for—have you read the speech yet, Steve?

Q. No.

President Bush. Because you know I——

Q. I was hoping to get some excerpts.

President Bush. ——speech at the White House. Yes, I'll lay out the program—I'm going to give a speech tomorrow at our NASA Headquarters about America's approach to space exploration. I really don't want to give you the details because I want you to pay attention to what I have to say. But I will tell you that the spirit is going to be one of continued exploration, is to find—seeking new horizons and investing in a program that is—that meets that objective. And I'll lay it out tomorrow.

Thank you.

Prime Minister Martin. Let me just say, I'm glad to see that we're not the only Government that's afraid of a leak. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. That's right.

Passport Agreement/Deportation

Q. Mr. President, on the passport agreement, does that signal a special status for Canada in terms of U.S. matters of national security? And can you assure Canada that beyond notifying the potential for deporting a Canadian citizen, that it would not deport a Canadian citizen to a third country that might torture them?

President Bush. What I can assure Canada is that we will do everything we can—will do to protect our country from attack. That's one thing I will assure, which should make Canadians very happy to hear, because we've got a lot of Canadians living in the United States, and we've got a lot of Canadians with relatives in the United States.

Secondly, I will assure Canadians that we will work very closely with the Martin Government on issues—passport issues. And one of the things that I promised him is that there will be prior notification prior to any consideration of deportation. We owe it to the Government to be forthcoming and forthright.

Listen, Canada and America have got a special status already. You said "special status"—we've got special status by virtue of the fact that there is significant interchange on an hourly basis between our two countries. I mean, it's a vibrant border; it's an active economic relationship. It is special because we share values. It is special because we share a long border. And the key thing on this issue is to communicate clearly with the authorities, the Canadian authorities, and for me to communicate clearly with my counterpart, the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Martin. Look, I think that, again, under international law, countries have the right to deport to a third country. And what's really happened here is that there has been a—agreement that consular services will be provided and prior notification. And that is very, very important, and that is—that's pretty unique.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 a.m. at the Inter-Continental Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration

January 14, 2004

Thanks for the warm welcome. I'm honored to be with the men and women of NASA. I thank those of you who have come in person. I welcome those who are listening by video. This agency and the dedicated professionals who serve it have always reflected the finest values of our country, daring, discipline, ingenuity, and unity in the pursuit of great goals.

America is proud of our space program. The risktakers and visionaries of this agency have expanded human knowledge, have revolutionized our understanding of the universe, and produced technological advances that have benefited all of humanity.

Inspired by all that has come before and guided by clear objectives, today we set a new course for America's space program. We will give NASA a new focus and vision for future exploration. We will build new ships to carry man forward into the universe, to gain a new foothold on the moon, and to prepare for new journeys to worlds beyond our own.

I am comfortable in delegating these new goals to NASA, under the leadership of Sean O'Keefe. He's doing an excellent job. I appreciate Commander Mike Foale's introduction. I'm sorry I couldn't shake his hand. [*Laughter*] Perhaps, Commissioner, you'll bring him by—Administrator, you'll bring him by to the Oval Office when he returns, so I can thank him in person.

I also know he is in space with his colleague, Alexander Kaleri, who happens to be a Russian cosmonaut. I appreciate the joint efforts of the Russians with our country to explore. I want to thank the astronauts who are with us, the courageous spacial entrepreneurs who set such a wonderful example for the young of our country.

And we've got some veterans with us today. I appreciate the astronauts of yesterday who are with us as well, who inspired the astronauts of today to serve our country.

I appreciate so very much the Members of Congress being here. Tom DeLay is here, leading a House delegation. Senator Nelson is here from the Senate. I am honored that you all have come. I appreciate you're interested in the subject. [*Laughter*] It is a subject that's important to this administration. It's a subject that's mighty important to the country and to the world.

Two centuries ago, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark left St. Louis to explore the new lands acquired in the Louisiana Purchase. They made that journey in the spirit of discovery, to learn the potential of vast new territory and to chart a way for others to follow. America has ventured forth into space for the same reasons. We have undertaken space travel because the desire to explore and understand is part of our character.

And that quest has brought tangible benefits that improve our lives in countless ways. The exploration of space has led to advances in weather forecasting, in communications, in computing, search and rescue technology, robotics, and electronics. Our investment in space exploration helped to create our satellite telecommunications network and the Global Positioning System. Medical technologies that help prolong life, such as the imaging processing used in CAT scanners and MRI machines, trace their origins to technology engineered for the use in space.

Our current programs and vehicles for exploring space have brought us far, and they have served us well. The space shuttle has flown more than a hundred missions. It has been used to conduct important research and to increase the sum of human knowledge. Shuttle crews and the scientists and engineers who support them have helped build the International Space Station.

Telescopes, including those in space, have revealed more than 100 planets in the last decade alone. Probes have shown us stunning images of the rings of Saturn and the outer planets of our solar system. Robotic explorers have found evidence of water, a key ingredient for life, on Mars and on the moons of Jupiter. At this very hour, the Mars Exploration Rover Spirit is searching for evidence of life beyond the Earth.

Yet for all these successes, much remains for us to explore and to learn. In the past 30 years, no human being has set foot on another world or ventured farther upward

into space than 386 miles, roughly the distance from Washington, DC, to Boston, Massachusetts. America has not developed a new vehicle to advance human exploration in space in nearly a quarter-century. It is time for America to take the next steps.

Today I announce a new plan to explore space and extend a human presence across our solar system. We will begin the effort quickly, using existing programs and personnel. We'll make steady progress, one mission, one voyage, one landing at a time.

Our first goal is to complete the International Space Station by 2010. We will finish what we have started. We will meet our obligations to our 15 international partners on this project. We will focus our future research aboard the station on the long-term effects of space travel on human biology. The environment of space is hostile to human beings. Radiation and weightlessness pose dangers to human health, and we have much to learn about their long-term effects before human crews can venture through the vast voids of space for months at a time. Research onboard the station and here on Earth will help us better understand and overcome the obstacles that limit exploration. Through these efforts, we will develop the skills and techniques necessary to sustain further space exploration.

To meet this goal, we will return the space shuttle to flight as soon as possible, consistent with safety concerns and the recommendations of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board. The shuttle's chief purpose over the next several years will be to help finish assembly of the International Space Station. In 2010, the space shuttle, after nearly 30 years of duty, will be retired from service.

Our second goal is to develop and test a new spacecraft, the crew exploration vehicle, by 2008 and to conduct the first manned mission no later than 2014. The crew exploration vehicle will be capable of ferrying astronauts and scientists to the space station after the shuttle is retired. But the main purpose of this spacecraft will be to carry astronauts beyond our orbit to other worlds. This will be the first spacecraft of its kind since the Apollo Command Module.

Our third goal is to return to the moon by 2020, as the launching point for missions beyond. Beginning no later than 2008, we will send a series of robotic missions to the lunar surface to research and prepare for future human exploration. Using the crew exploration vehicle, we will undertake extended human missions to the moon as early as 2015, with the goal of living and working there for increasingly extended periods of time. Eugene Cernan, who is with us today, the last man to set foot on the lunar surface, said this as he left, "We leave as we came, and God willing as we shall return, with peace and hope for all mankind." America will make those words come true.

Returning to the moon is an important step for our space program. Establishing an extended human presence on the moon could vastly reduce the costs of further space exploration, making possible ever more ambitious missions. Lifting heavy spacecraft and fuel out of the Earth's gravity is expensive. Spacecraft assembled and provisioned on the moon could escape its far lower gravity using far less energy, and thus, far less cost. Also, the moon is home to abundant resources. Its soil contains raw materials that might be harvested and processed into rocket fuel or breathable air. We can use our time on the moon to develop and test new approaches and technologies and systems that will allow us to function in other, more challenging environments. The moon is a logical step toward further progress and achievement.

With the experience and knowledge gained on the moon, we will then be ready to take the next steps of space exploration, human missions to Mars and to worlds beyond. Robotic missions will serve as trailblazers, the advanced guard to the unknown. Probes, landers, and other vehicles of this kind continue to prove their worth, sending spectacular images and vast amounts of data back to Earth. Yet the human thirst for knowledge ultimately cannot be satisfied by even the most vivid pictures or the most detailed measurements. We need to see and examine and touch for ourselves. And only human beings are capable of adapting to the inevitable uncertainties posed by space travel.

As our knowledge improves, we'll develop new power generation propulsion, life support, and other systems that can support

more distant travels. We do not know where this journey will end, yet we know this: Human beings are headed into the cosmos.

And along this journey, we'll make many technological breakthroughs. We don't know yet what those breakthroughs will be, but we can be certain they'll come and that our efforts will be repaid many times over. We may discover resources on the moon or Mars that will boggle the imagination, that will test our limits to dream. And the fascination generated by further exploration will inspire our young people to study math and science and engineering and create a new generation of innovators and pioneers.

This will be a great and unifying mission for NASA, and we know that you'll achieve it. I have directed Administrator O'Keefe to review all of NASA's current spaceflight and exploration activities and direct them toward the goals I have outlined. I will also form a commission of private and public sector experts to advise on implementing the vision that I've outlined today. This commission will report to me within 4 months of its first meeting. I'm today naming former Secretary of the Air Force Pete Aldridge to be the chair of the commission. Thank you for being here today, Pete. He has tremendous experience in the Department of Defense and the aerospace industry. He is going to begin this important work right away.

We'll invite other nations to share the challenges and opportunities of this new era of discovery. The vision I outline today is a journey, not a race, and I call on other nations to join us on this journey, in a spirit of cooperation and friendship.

Achieving these goals requires a long-term commitment. NASA's current 5-year budget is $86 billion. Most of the funding we need for the new endeavors will come from reallocating $11 billion within that budget. We need some new resources, however. I will call upon Congress to increase NASA's budget by roughly a billion dollars, spread out over the next 5 years. This increase, along with refocusing of our space agency, is a solid beginning to meet the challenges and the goals that we set today. It's only a beginning. Future funding decisions will be guided by the progress we make in achieving these goals.

We begin this venture knowing that space travel brings great risks. The loss of the Space Shuttle *Columbia* was less than one year ago. Since the beginning of our space program, America has lost 23 astronauts and one astronaut from an allied nation, men and women who believed in their mission and accepted the dangers. As one family member said, "The legacy of *Columbia* must carry on—for the benefit of our children and yours." *Columbia's* crew did not turn away from the challenge, and neither will we.

Mankind is drawn to the heavens for the same reason we were once drawn into unknown lands and across the open sea. We choose to explore space because doing so improves our lives and lifts our national spirit. So let us continue the journey.

May God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to C. Michael Foale, commander, and Alexander Kaleri, flight engineer, Expedition 8, International Space Station; and Senator Bill Nelson of Florida.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain

January 14, 2004

President Bush. *Bienvenidos a mi amigo,* a friend of mine, a friend of our country, a person who I admire a lot. This is a happy moment and a sad moment. It's happy to be with President Aznar. It is sad to realize this will be the last time he'll come to the Oval Office as the leader of Spain.

I say "sad" because our time together has been very productive for the people of America and, I believe, the people of Spain and the people of the world. We have worked together to spread freedom, and the world is more peaceful today because of the decisions we jointly made.

However, this is not the last time I will see the President. I am confident that the friendship we have made will last beyond our—my time in office and his time in office. I look back—I look forward to welcoming him back to America as a non-President. We'll be members of the ex-Presidents club.

And so, Mr. President, I'm really glad you're here. I look forward to having dinner

with you tonight and your great wife. And again, in front of these cameras, I want to thank you for your steadfast leadership, for your courage, for your wisdom, and your advice.

[*At this point, President Aznar spoke in Spanish, and no translation was provided.*]

President Bush. Thank you all.

Q. Translation?

President Bush. He doesn't need to translate for me. I understood every word. [*Laughter*]

[*The interpreter then translated President Aznar's remarks as follows.*]

President Aznar. Good evening, everyone. I want to thank President Bush once again for this very warm welcome, for the invitation, for his hospitality. For me, it is a satisfaction and an honor to be here with him again. I consider him a very good friend. He has been my friend during my time as President of the Government of Spain, and I will continue to consider him my friend afterwards.

And a friend—I am a friend of the United States now, and I will continue to be a friend of the United States in the future. I consider that, at present, the relationship between Spain and the United States is closer and tighter than it has ever been.

I will continue to work to do everything to strengthen the relationship, the Atlantic link. I will work for freedom, for human rights, for democracy, for stability, prosperity around the world. And I know that President Bush will be able to count upon me to continue working in that direction. So I will continue to work for the world and for the relationship between the United States and Spain.

President Bush. *Adios.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:28 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ana Botella de Aznar, wife of President Aznar. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to Faith-Based and Community Leaders in New Orleans, Louisiana

January 15, 2004

Thank you all very much for your warm welcome. Reverend Brown, thank you for your hospitality, your gracious hospitality. It's not easy to host a President. [*Laughter*] It seems as if the entourages are quite large. So I want to thank you for accommodating me and this cast of characters that travels with me. [*Laughter*] I'm here to talk about something vital to the future of the country, and I appreciate you giving me a chance to share with you my dreams and aspirations for all our citizens.

I'm really not worthy to stand here, when I think about the fact that not only Reverend Brown preaches here on a regular basis, but this is the very place where Martin Luther King stood as well some 42 years ago. It's from this pulpit that he preached. Today would have been his 75th birthday. It's important for our country to honor his life and what he stood for.

Dr. King understood that faith is power greater than all others. That's what he knew. It's an important lesson for us to remember here in America, that God's word can humble the mighty, can lift up the meek, and can bring comfort and strength to all who yearn for justice and freedom. Those of us who are involved with public policy must not fear that philosophy as we all work together to save lives.

I'm at this church to talk about the importance of what we call a Faith-Based Initiative. Really what I'm here to say is that in the land of plenty, we must recognize there are still people who hurt. In the land of plenty, there are people who search for the light, who simply want a chance to succeed and realize their God-given talents. And those of us who have been blessed with the opportunity to help must play to the strength of our country in order to help save lives. The strength of America is found in the hearts and souls of our fellow citizens. This country must not fear the influence of faith in the

future of this country. We must welcome faith in order to make America a better place.

So Reverend Brown, thank you, and thank your wife, Mary, and your son, Benjie, for your hospitality. I appreciate so very much the Governor being here. The Governor not only was kind enough to meet me at the airport, but she was kind enough to ride from the airport to this church. We had a good discussion about the needs of Louisiana. She's not a shrinking violet when it comes to describing what she would like to see in terms of responsiveness. I appreciate that. I'm glad you brought Coach. [*Laughter*]

I'm honored that Congressman David Vitter has traveled today with me. Thank you, Congressman, for coming. The mayor was at our roundtable discussion, which, by the way, happened to be at a square table, but—[*laughter*]—I appreciate working with the mayor.

Traveling with me today from Washington, DC, is a longtime friend. He is the Acting Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. When the Senate gets together, he's going to be the Secretary of the Housing—of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Alphonso Jackson. Thanks for coming, Alphonso. I appreciate you being here.

Archbishop Alfred Hughes is with us today. Archbishop, thanks for coming. I'm honored you are here.

I know this will embarrass him, but I've got to mention him. One of the people that influenced me a lot when I was the Governor of Texas, influenced me in terms of what faith-based programs can mean in people's lives, was Kirbyjon Caldwell. Kirbyjon is from Houston. He's the senior pastor of the Windsor Village United Methodist Church. He is a true social entrepreneur. He has used his position as a pastor to change lives and communities in significant ways, ways that government couldn't possibly do. Kirbyjon, thanks for coming. I appreciate you being here.

I mentioned a roundtable discussion. We just had a lot of people from the community, people who have been helped, people who are helping, neighborhood healers here to share their stories. I want to thank all of them for coming to talk about the influence of faith and their capacity to help change lives. I appreciate the choir being here.

Not only was I met by local dignitaries and elected officials when I landed at the airport, I was also met by Tenisha Stevens. Where is Tenisha? Tenisha, there you are. If you're wondering why I would mention Tenisha, she is a soldier in the army of compassion. She's a soul who is interested in listening to a universal call and is a tutor. She's taking time out of her life to work in the after-school programs right here in this church, Pastor. She is a mentor. She's willing to help save a life.

That's the spirit of America, isn't it, when citizens who are willing to sacrifice time on behalf of saving a life. We need more mentors in our society. If you're a citizen in this community or any community around the country who want to know what you can do to help America, mentor a child; teach a child to read; love a child.

Tenisha, I want to thank you for serving. You're such a good example for other people around the country. Thank you for being a soldier in the great army of compassion here in America.

Many of the problems that are facing our society are problems of the heart. Addiction is the problem of a heart—of the heart. I know I've told this story before. I was a drinker. I quit drinking because I changed my heart. I guess I was a one-man faith-based program. [*Laughter*]

Problems that face our society are oftentimes problems that require something greater than just a government program or a government counselor to solve. Intractable problems, problems that seem impossible to solve can be solved. There is the miracle of salvation in our—that is real, that is tangible, that is available for all to see. Miracles are possible in our society, one person at a time.

But it requires a willingness to understand the origin of miracle. Miracles happen as a result of the love of the Almighty, professed, by the way, taught, by the way, by religions from all walks of life, whether it be Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu—people who have heard that universal call to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself, and then surround someone who hurts with love. Love is powerful. Love is soul-changing,

Love doesn't happen because of government. Love happens because of the inspiration of something greater than government. That's what we're here to talk about, programs based upon faith.

Right here in this church, there are faith-based programs. Any program emanating out of a church or a synagogue or a mosque is a faith-based program. So when you hear some people talk about faith-based programs, those are programs that start as a result of a group of folks of faith deciding to do something about a problem. And the fundamental question in our society is, how does the Federal Government relate to programs of faith? "The mighty check writer"—how does it relate when it writes checks to meet social needs with people who are solving our problems in spite of government? My attitude is, the Government should not fear faith-based programs. We ought to welcome faith-based programs, and we ought to fund faith-based programs.

This church receives Federal funding for childcare. It must be comforting for a mom or a dad to drop off his or her child to a childcare center run by a church. It's a safe place, to begin with, but it's also a place where there's values. The handbook of this particular childcare is a universal handbook. It's been around for a long time. It doesn't need to be invented. Let me see your handbook there. [*Laughter*] This handbook is a good book; it's a good go-by.

And yet our governments have, frankly, discriminated against faith-based programs. It's the truth. How does it happen that way? Well, oftentimes a faith-based program that applies for Federal Government says, "I want to help." And they say, "Fine, you can help, but take the cross down from the wall. Take off the Star of David. Take down the crescent." And my answer to that is, how can you be a faith-based program if you can't practice your faith? It seems to be a contradiction in terms.

Government policy said, "On the one hand, perhaps you can help. On the other hand, you can't practice your faith." Faith-based programs are only effective because they do practice faith. It's important for our Government to understand that. Government oftentimes will say, "Yes, you can participate, but you've got to change your board of directors to meet our qualifications. You've got to conform to our rules." The problem is, faith-based programs only conform to one set of rules, and it's bigger than Government rules. The inspiration is not from bureaucracy, and that's what's important for Government policymakers to understand.

I have asked Congress to not fear faith. See, the debate in Washington oftentimes is, well, the church will become the state, or the state will become the church. To me, that's never going to happen, and we won't let it happen. As a matter of fact, the separation of church and state is a vital part of our country. The freedom of religion is a vital part of our country.

But on the other hand, when people are able to deliver results, people should not say—people shouldn't say, "Well, the results are coming from the wrong source of programming." We ought to say, "We want results. We welcome results, and we're willing to fund programs that are capable of delivering results. We want to fund programs that save Americans, one soul at a time."

In order to get beyond the debate of process, we must say—we must ask the question in Washington, "Does the program work? Does the program to help the addicted work? Is the homeless program working?" That's the question that must be asked.

So I called on Congress to join me in passing laws that would allow the—open up the Federal Treasury to faith-based programs, and they balked. They got caught up in the process. So I signed an Executive order, an Executive order that instructed all Federal agencies not to discriminate against religious groups. Cabinet Secretary—soon-to-be Cabinet Secretary Jackson now knows the call. One reason he's the Cabinet Secretary is because he already heard it, however, and that is that we're not going to discriminate against faith-based groups when it comes to housing initiatives.

We're spending a lot of time traveling the country. I've got a fellow that works in my office in the White House named Jim Towey. Towey is an interesting character. He is a—well, I shouldn't call him a character; he's a fine citizen. [*Laughter*] Believe it or not, Towey—you're not going to believe this, but

it's true—he was Mother Teresa's lawyer. It's an interesting society where Mother Teresa needs a lawyer. [*Laughter*] But Towey's job is to educate people to what is possible, educate the social entrepreneurs, those who are on the frontline of saving lives, about what is possible, and to assure people who try to access Federal funds that you won't have to change your mission.

In other words, we're changing a culture, and it takes a lot of work. And I appreciate you all giving me a chance to come and be a part of explaining what is taking place in Washington, DC. Cultures change because others will then go out and say, "It's okay to try to access money to meet our need. The Government now is not going to thwart you." It's going to take a while to make sure that these faith-based offices which we've created in every Cabinet Department—or most of the Cabinet departments in Washington—are able to get out the word.

But we want you to help spread the word. We want those of you on the frontline of saving lives to feel comfortable now of accessing the billions of dollars which are available at the Federal Government level. What we said is, "The playing field is now level." You've got a chance to bid, right along with other types of organizations, to be a part of the grantmaking process without fear of discrimination. It's a significant change. I'm comfortable in pushing the change because I know the nature of the work that is taking place.

Let me give you one example. Three months after HUD opened its doors to faith-based groups, 600 such groups have received $168 million to provide shelter for the homeless. In other words, we're beginning to change. I love the idea of religious organizations providing help for the homeless. What a comforting place for someone who is lost and looking for help to be able to provide that help.

It is a—it's just the beginning, Mr. Secretary-to-be. And it's just the beginning of a lot of change. Health and Human Services Department, HHS, is now opening up its grantmaking process for faith-based programs. It's billions of dollars now available. And that's good for the society. And it's good for our country.

Let me give you an example of some progress being made. Donna Blackburn—raise your hand, Donna. Donna's a—she's a good soul. She started a shelter for battered women and their children in Baton Rouge. First of all, thank you for starting a shelter. It's a noble calling. It's important for people like Donna to know there's a problem and respond to it. Donna didn't wait for a law to be passed, by the way. She didn't get permission from the President. She didn't say to the Governor, "Can I do this?" She just did it. That's what happens in America. People see a problem, and they move.

And then the fundamental question is, when you find that spirit moving, what is the role of Government? She wanted to make the shelter, of course, a safe haven. But she also wanted to make a place where God's grace shines. She wanted the presence of the Almighty there to help her and her staff deal with the problems, the difficult problems that a battered woman and her children face. The problem was—and she applied for Federal money, housing money to take this donated warehouse and convert it into a house of love. The local government said, "Yes, you can probably have some money, but you can't have prayer. You can't express faith."

Donna understands that the use of Federal money is not to proselytize. All comers are welcome. If a person of another faith walks in as a battered woman, she will be received. But Donna also understands that in order to make her program work, that they've got to be able to exercise their faith.

We moved at the Federal level to say, "No discrimination against faith-based programs." Last night, she reported to us that the Baton Rouge city council approved her faith-based grant, no strings attached, and now she's got $60,000 to help convert her shelter.

Somebody said, "Well, thank you for the Federal Government." Now, see, you've got it wrong. You don't need to be thanking the Federal Government. We're talking about the people's money, anyway. It's the Federal Government's job—the Federal Government's job is to thank the Donnas of the world, the social people—the social entrepreneurs, the people who are literally changing America, one heart at a time. That's who

we're here to thank, and that's where our society must recognize and welcome.

Nicole Hilliard is here. Where are you, Nicole? There you go, okay. I embarrassed her. Nicole is a single mom. By the way, that's the toughest job in America, being a single mom. She's got a 15-year-old son. She was hurting. I shouldn't be giving her testimony for her, but I will paraphrase. She hurt, and she was worried, just like a mom would worry. She didn't have any housing. She was broke, stone broke, and she was worried as a mom, "How do I take care of my child?"

So she went to the First Evangelist Housing—went to the First Evangelist Church. This says, went to the First Evangelist Housing CDC. That's a little too technical. She went to the church, is where she went. She said, "I hope to be able to get some help at this church." Her pastor is here, Pastor Taylor is with us as well. She said, "I want some help." She was trying to escape not only an abusive relationship, she was trying to escape desperation and hopelessness. There's nothing better, by the way, than a faith-based program to provide hope. Again, I don't care what religion it is. Nothing more hopeful than the Word. She and her son moved into a one-bedroom apartment managed by First Evangelist. That apartment was supported by Federal money. Alphonso shouldn't worry about where that money goes. He just ought to be worried about whether or not that money is saving lives and providing a chance for people to find shelter.

By the way, as a result of interfacing with this faith-based group, she went back to school. She found a job. She lives in a neighborhood, by the way, which has been transformed by the faith-based institution itself. She's talked about what it means to walk from the bus stop without fear of life.

It's amazing what can happen when faith-based programs begin to influence entire neighborhoods. People change; the attitude of the people in the neighborhood change. Nicole's story is one that shows that individual lives are rescued on a daily basis. Our job is to help the rescuers find those who need to be saved and helped.

Tonja Myles is here. I got to know Tonja because in my State of the Union last year, I introduced her to the country, and she's still talking to me, fortunately. [*Laughter*] She's from Baton Rouge. She directs what's called Set Free Indeed. It's an interesting name, isn't it? Set Free talks about the inspiration of the program. She receives money, Federal money to help save lives.

Addiction, addicts need to be treated. They need to be helped. A small number of people consume most of the drugs. We need to find them and help save their lives. Sometimes a government counselor can work. It can make a difference. A lot of times, it requires a faith-based program to help break that terrible habit.

And Tonja understood that. She started this program. She said she heard a call from God to start the program. It wasn't a Government bureaucracy that she talked to. It was a call from a higher being. And as a result, that program is inculcated with that spirit, and she's saving lives, one at a time.

Interestingly enough, by heralding her program, a lot of other people came. I want you to herald programs. When you find something that's working in your local community, make sure that the citizenry knows what's happening. This is not me. This is not the Governor. It's just not the mayor. It's local community leaders willing to hold up examples of great success, of great healing. People need to know what's available. People need to know that there's love and the capacity to help save lives in their very neighborhood. You're here because you're interested. You're leaders, yourselves. Please make your programs and what is available known.

The Government can help. I mean, we're calling for special initiatives: $100 million for drug treatment, 48 million for the Compassion Capital Fund, which is really to help startup faith-based programs. Like Kirbyjon—I told Kirbyjon, I said, "Kirbyjon, you're successful. Help another church learn how to be successful. Reach out. Use your entrepreneurial skills, and find another church to help that pastor understand what is available." That's what the Compassion Capital Fund does.

We've got $50 million, by the way, in the budget that supports mentors for children whose moms or dad might be in prison or are in prison. See, this—the money is—it's

important, and we're funding out of Washington and funding out of the State level. But more important is, where does the money go? And that's what we're here to talk about. Congress must not fear faith-based programs that interface and save lives. They must welcome such programs. So that's what I'm here to talk about, Pastor, good public policy based upon the willingness of our citizenry to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself.

One of my favorite pulpit stories came when a preacher was preaching. A guy, right where Congressman is sitting, he stood up and said, "Use me, Lord. Use me." The man was about halfway through the sermon. He kind of ignored him. Maybe that's happened to you before, and you kind of ignore whoever is standing up yelling. Next Sunday, halfway through the sermon, same fellow pops up and says, "Use me, Lord. Use me." Third Sunday, the same thing happens. So the pastor comes down, he says, "Fine, you said, 'Use me, Lord. Use me.'" He said, "I'll be glad to use you. Why don't you paint and scrape all the pews." [*Laughter*] Next Sunday, the guy stands up and says, "Use me, Lord, use me, but only in an advisory capacity." [*Laughter*]

No, no, the people here are not advisers. They're doers. People in faith-based programs all around the country just don't sit around and say, "Here's some advice." They say, "What can I do to answer a call? How can I help change my community and thereby change my country?" And that's what you're doing.

Our Government must understand America is a hopeful and optimistic place, particularly when we apply the great strength of our country, which is the love of our citizens, to changing America, one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time.

May God bless your work, and may God continue to bless America. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:57 a.m. at the Union Bethel AME Church. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Thomas B. Brown, pastor, Union Bethel AME Church; Gov. Kathleen Blanco of Louisiana and her husband, Raymond "Coach" Blanco; Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; Archbishop Alfred C. Hughes, archdiocese of New Orleans; and Rev. Warren Taylor, pastor, First Evangelist Missionary Baptist Church.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in New Orleans

January 15, 2004

Thank you all. Thank you all very much for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's great to be back in the Big Easy. I've got a lot of good memories from this part of the world. [*Laughter*] Some I can share with you—[*laughter*]—and some I can't. [*Laughter*]

We love New Orleans, fabulous city. Thanks for coming. I appreciate your support. It's great to be in the State of Louisiana, the home of those Bayou Bengals, the mighty LSU Tigers. That's pretty—that was—that's awesome. [*Laughter*] It was exciting for Louisiana. I'm proud for you. I'm also glad that you didn't play the University of Texas this year. [*Laughter*] Wait a minute. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank you for what you did for Vice President Cheney and me last—that last time we were ran, in 2000. We carried Louisiana. I'll tell you what we're doing today: We're laying the foundation for what is going to be another victory in the great State of Louisiana, and we're laying the foundation for what is going to be a great national victory in November of 2004.

And I appreciate your help. I want to thank you for coming today. I want to thank you for your support. I want to thank you for your prayers. I want to thank you for what you're going to do, which is turn out that vote, find those voters and turn them to the polls.

I'm getting ready, and I'm loosening up. [*Laughter*] But politics is going to come in its own time. See, I've got a job to do. There's a lot on my agenda, on behalf of all the people of this country. As this campaign gets cranked up, you tell the people that I'm working on their behalf and I'm going to continue to work hard to earn their confidence by keeping America secure and strong and prosperous and free.

I am sorry Laura is not here. She is a fabulous First Lady. She's doing a great job. She is—she really, really, makes me proud and thankful she said yes when I said, "Will you?"

[*Laughter*] She sends her love to all our friends here in New Orleans and some of our friends who might have snuck in from Texas.

I appreciate Boysie. I've known him for a long time. I want to thank you for your leadership, Boysie. You and Canizaro are doing a fine job. I want to thank all of you who worked hard to make this event such a successful event.

You've sent some good people from Louisiana to the Congress. I want to thank Jim McCrery for joining us today, and the next United States Senator, David Vitter.

Mr. Mayor, I know you're here. I want to thank you for coming. I appreciate the mayor of this great city. I appreciate his leadership. I appreciate his vision. I look forward to working with him to make sure New Orleans realizes its full potential, and everybody in this city has a chance to succeed.

Joey Durel is here, the city-parish president from Lafayette. I want to thank you for coming, Joey. I want to thank all the State and local officials who are here. I want to thank my friend Pat Brister, who is the chairman of the Louisiana Republican Party, for being here today.

I particularly want to say thanks to all the grassroots activists—[*applause*]—yes, there you are. The phone callers, the sign-putter-uppers, the envelope addressers—get ready. [*Laughter*] We're counting on you. We're counting on you to work those precincts. We're counting on you to work those phones. We're counting on you to go to the community centers. We're counting on you to turn out the vote.

I want you to remind the people that over the last 3 years, our Nation has acted decisively to confront great challenges. I came to this office to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. I came to seize opportunities instead of letting them slip away. My administration is meeting the tests of our time.

Terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got. We've captured or killed many of the key leaders of the Al Qaida network, and the rest of them know we're on their trail. In Afghanistan and in Iraq, we gave ultimatums to terror regimes. Those regimes chose defiance, and those regimes are no more. Fifty million people in those two countries once lived under tyranny, and today, they live in freedom.

Three years ago, our military was not receiving the resources it needed, and morale was beginning to suffer. So we increased the defense budgets to prepare for the threats of a new era. And today, no one in the world can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

Three years ago, the economy was in trouble, and a recession was beginning, and then there was attacks on our country and scandals in corporate America and war—all of which affected the people's confidence. But this administration acted. We passed tough new laws to hold corporate criminals to account. And to get the economy going again, I have twice led the United States Congress to pass historic tax relief for the American people.

When Americans have more take-home pay to spend, to save, or invest, the whole economy grows, and people are more likely to find a job. And so we're returning more money to the people to help them raise their families. We're reducing taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage investment. We're giving small businesses incentives to expand and to hire new people. With all these actions, this administration has laid the foundation for greater prosperity and more jobs across America so every single citizen has a chance to realize the American Dream.

And today, the economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. The figures for the third quarter of 2003 show that the economy grew at an annual rate of 8.2 percent, the fastest pace in nearly 20 years. Productivity is high. Business investment is rising. Housing construction is expanding. Manufacturing activity is increasing. We've added over a quarter-million new jobs in the last 5 months. The tax relief we passed is working.

Three years ago, there was a lot of talk about education reform in our Nation's Capital, and frankly, there wasn't much action. So I acted. I called for and the Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act. With a solid bipartisan majority, we delivered the most dramatic education reforms in a generation. We've increased funding, particularly for the poor. But in return for access funding,

we're finally asking the question of school districts all across America, "Are you teaching our children how to read and write and add and subtract?" This administration is challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. We believe every child can learn, and we expect every child—every school to teach so that not one single child is left behind in America.

We reorganized our Government and created the Department of Homeland Security to better safeguard ports like New Orleans' port, better safeguard our borders, and to better protect the American people. We passed trade promotion authority to open up new markets for Louisiana's farmers and ranchers and manufacturers and entrepreneurs. We passed budget agreements that have helped to maintain spending discipline in Washington, DC. And we recently completed the greatest advance in health care coverage for America's seniors since the founding of Medicare. The new Medicare bill will give older Americans the option of a prescription drug benefit and more control over their health care so that they receive the modern medical care that they deserve. On issue after issue, this administration has acted on principle, has kept its word, and has made progress for the American people.

The Congress gets a lot of credit. I enjoy working with Speaker Hastert; I enjoy working with Leader Frist—two good, honorable people who are working hard to deliver results to the American people. I enjoy working with the two Congressmen who are here today. We're working hard to change the tone in Washington. There's too much needless politics in the Nation's Capital, too much zero-sum attitude, too much backbiting. The best way to change that tone is to focus on the people's business, is to deliver results, and that's exactly what we're doing.

Those are the kind of people I've attracted to my administration, results-oriented people, good, honorable, honest people from all walks of life. I put together a fantastic administration. Our country has had no finer Vice President than Vice President Dick Cheney. My mother may have a second opinion. [*Laughter*]

In 3 years, we have done a lot. We have come far. But the work is only beginning. I have set great goals worthy of a great nation. First, America is committed to expanding the realm of freedom and peace for our own security and for the benefit of the world. And second, in our own country, we will work for a society that is prosperous and compassionate so that every citizen—every citizen—has a chance to work and to succeed and realize the great promise of this country. It is clear that the future of freedom and peace depend on the actions of America. This Nation is freedom's home and freedom's defender. We welcome this charge of history, and we are keeping it.

The war on terror continues. The enemies of freedom are not idle, and neither are we. This country will not rest; we will not tire; we will not stop until this danger to civilization is removed.

We are confronting that danger in Iraq, where all people can be certain they will never again have to fear the rule of Saddam Hussein. The Ba'athist holdouts, largely responsible for the current violence, now know there will be no return to corrupt power and privilege they once held. All Iraqis who have taken the side of freedom have taken the winning side.

We will still face terrorists who would rather go on killing the innocent than accept the rise of liberty in the Middle East. You see, they know that the advance of freedom in Iraq will be a major defeat in the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake the will of the United States of America. America will never be intimidated by a bunch of thugs and assassins.

We are aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we do not have to face them in our own country. And other nations are helping—a lot of other nations are helping—because they understand a free Iraq, a peaceful Iraq, a free Iraq in the heart of the Middle East will make the world more secure. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume more of their own defense and move toward self government.

These are not easy tasks, but they are essential tasks. The United States of America will finish what we have begun, and we will win this essential victory in the war against terror.

In order to make the world more secure and peaceful, we're working to oppose proliferation all around the world. Last month, after talks with the United States and Great Britain, Libya voluntarily committed to disclose and dismantle all weapons of mass destruction programs. Leaders around the world now know weapons of mass destruction do not bring influence or prestige; they bring isolation and other unwelcome consequences. Nations who abandon the pursuit of these weapons will find an open path to better relations with the United States of America.

Our greatest security comes from the advance of human liberty because free nations do not support terror, free nations do not attack their neighbors, free nations do not threaten the world with weapons of mass terror. Americans believe that freedom is the deepest need and hope of every human heart. I believe that freedom is the future of every nation. And I know that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to every man and woman in this world.

America also understands that unprecedented influence brings tremendous responsibilities. We have duties in this world. And when we see disease and starvation and hopeless poverty, we will not turn away. On the continent of Africa, this great Nation, this strong and compassionate land, is bringing the healing power of medicine to millions of men and women and children now suffering with AIDS. America is leading the world in this incredibly important work of human rescue.

We face challenges at home as well, and we'll be equal to those challenges. This administration will continue to promote a pro-growth, pro-entrepreneur economic agenda until anybody who wants to find a job is able to do so.

And for the sake of our health care system, we need to cut down on the frivolous lawsuits which increase the cost of medicine. People who've been harmed by a bad doc deserve their day in court, no question about it. Yet the system should not reward lawyers who are simply fishing for a rich settlement. Because frivolous lawsuits drive up the cost of health care—and they do—they affect the Federal budget. Medical liability reform is a national issue which requires a national solution. I sent up a good bill to the House, and the House passed it. The bill is stuck in the Senate. I call upon the Senate to act on behalf of the American people. Perhaps you know a Senator or two you need to contact here in Louisiana. No one—no one—and the Senate must understand this—no one has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit in America. We need medical liability reform now.

I have a responsibility as the President to make sure the judicial system runs well. And I've met that duty. I've nominated superb men and women for the Federal courts, people who will interpret the law, not legislate from the bench, people like Miguel Estrada. You might have heard of Miguel Estrada here in the State of Louisiana. Some Members of the United States Senate are trying to keep my nominees off the bench by blocking up-or-down votes. Every judicial nominee deserves a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. It is time for some of the Members of the United States Senate to stop playing politics with American justice.

Congress needs to get me an energy bill. This country needs a plan. We need a plan to promote energy efficiency and more conservation, a plan to develop cleaner technology, to help us explore for energy in environmentally friendly ways. But one thing is for certain: We need an energy plan to make sure that this country does not have to rely upon foreign sources of energy.

Our strong and prosperous Nation must also be a compassionate nation. I will continue to advance our agenda of what I call compassionate conservatism, which means we'll apply the best and most innovative ideas to the tasks of helping our fellow citizens in need. There are still millions of men and women who want to end their dependence on government, become independent through work. We must build on the success of welfare reform to encourage job training programs that actually work so we can bring work and dignity into the lives of more of our fellow citizens. With the help of Congress, we're working to ensure that more Americans can serve their communities and

their country through the Citizen Service Program.

Both Houses need to reach agreement on my Faith-Based Initiative, an initiative that will help support the armies of compassion—people from all faiths, Christian or Jewish or Muslim faiths, who have heard the universal call and are loving a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves, people who are helping change America by caring for the homeless, mentoring children, and offering hope to the addicted. Congress must not fear the influence of faith. Congress must welcome faith-based programs to help solve the intractable problems of society.

A compassionate society must promote opportunity for all of us, including the independence and dignity that come from ownership. This administration will constantly strive to promote an ownership society in America. See, we want more people owning their own home. We have a minority homeownership gap in America. I proposed a plan to the Congress, starting with helping with the poorest of poor make a downpayment for a home, to close that gap. It's in the national interest that more people own their own home. We want people owning and managing their own healthcare accounts and their own retirement accounts. We want more people owning their own small business. This is an administration that understands, when someone owns something, he or she has a vital stake in the future of our country.

In a compassionate society, people respect one another. They respect their religions. They respect their point of view. And they take responsibility for the decisions they make. The culture of America is changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands that we're responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you are fortunate enough to be a mother or father, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're concerned about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in this new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

I see the culture of service and responsibility growing around us. I just met with some of the great social entrepreneurs of the State of Louisiana today, neighborhood healers, helpers, people who are actively involved in saving America, one heart and one soul and one conscience at a time. I started what's called the USA Freedom Corps. It's a chance to get people—it's an opportunity for people to extend a hand to a neighbor in need, and the response has been fantastic. Civil society in America is strong and vibrant. Our charities are strong. Churches and synagogues and mosques are strong. Policemen and firefighters and people who wear our Nation's uniform remind us what it means to sacrifice for something greater than yourself. Once again, the children of America believe in heroes because they see them every day.

In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of America. I've been privileged to see the compassion and the character of the American people. All the tests of the last 3 years have come to the right nation. We're a strong country, and we use that strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves. Abroad, we seek to lift whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it and know for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you all. Thank you all. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:06 p.m. at the National D-Day Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Donald "Boysie" Bollinger and Joe Canizaro, Louisiana State finance cochairmen, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Miguel A. Estrada, whose nomination to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit was withdrawn on September 4, 2003.

Proclamation 7751—Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2004

January 15, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, our Nation honors an American who dedicated his life to the fundamental principles of freedom, opportunity, and equal justice for all. Today, all Americans benefit from Dr. King's work and his legacy of courage, dignity, and moral clarity.

Forty years ago this past August, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Dr. King spoke passionately of his dream for America. He dreamed of an America where all citizens would be judged by the content of their character and not by the color of their skin. He dreamed of an America where all would enjoy the riches of freedom and the security of justice. He dreamed of an America where the doors of opportunity would be open to all of God's children.

Dr. King's leadership moved Americans to examine our hearts—to reject what he called the "tranquilizing drug of gradualism" on the path to racial justice—and to live up to the ideals of our Constitution and Declaration of Independence. America has come far in realizing Dr. King's dream, but there is still work to be done. In remembering Dr. King's vision and life of service, we renew our commitment to guaranteeing the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all Americans.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Monday, January 19, 2004, as the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday. I encourage all Americans to observe this day with appropriate activities and programs that honor the memory and legacy of Dr. King.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:38 a.m., January 16, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 20.

Memorandum on Designation of the State of Kuwait as a Major Non-NATO Ally

January 15, 2004

Presidential Determination No. 2004–21

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Designation of the State of Kuwait as a Major Non-NATO Ally

Consistent with the authority vested in me by section 517 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (the "Act"), I hereby designate the State of Kuwait as a Major Non-NATO Ally of the United States for the purposes of the Act and the Arms Export Control Act.

You are authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register.*

George W. Bush

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Requesting Emergency Funding for the Department of the Interior's National Park Service

January 15, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with provisions of the "1997 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Recovery from Natural Disasters, and for Overseas Peacekeeping Efforts, Including those in Bosnia" (Public Law 105–18), I hereby request and make available $22.5 million in emergency funding for the Department of the Interior's National Park Service.

These funds would allow for the repair and replacement of concession facilities at Yosemite National Park that were damaged in a 1997 flood.

The Congress required that certain prerequisites be met before these funds could be released. These requirements have been met and I designate the funds made available today as an emergency requirement consistent with the requirements of Public Law 105–18.

The details of this action are set forth in the attached letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Reception in Atlanta, Georgia

January 15, 2004

Thank you very much. Thanks for coming. And thanks for your support. I'm honored—first, let me tell you how honored I am to be introduced by a bestselling author—[*laughter*]—and a great American. I am privileged to call Zell Miller my friend. The people of Georgia are privileged to call him United States Senator. He is a decent, honorable citizen of this country.

I'm also proud to be on the stage with your Governor, Sonny. Sonny said, "I want you to meet some of my friends from the legislature." He said, "What's unusual about this bunch is they don't call themselves Republican." [*Laughter*] There's a handful of Democrat legislators here from the great State of Georgia. I know there's a handful of Republican legislators as well. I'm kind of taking you for granted tonight. [*Laughter*] But I do want to say thanks, Sonny—to Sonny and the Democrat legislators who've come. I'm proud to have you on my team. You're welcome on my team.

And I'm proud you all are here. We put together a good team in Georgia in the year 2000. We're going to do better in the year 2004. We're laying the foundation for what is going to be a great national victory in November of 2004. And you're helping, and I appreciate your help.

I'm loosening up. [*Laughter*] I'm getting ready. But I got a job to do for everybody who lives in this country. When you're going to your coffee shops and your community centers, they say, "What is George W. up to," you tell them this, that I'm doing the people's business in Washington, DC, that I'm working hard to earn the confidence of every single American by keeping this Nation secure and strong and prosperous and free.

I know that Zell's wife, Shirley, is with us today as well. Shirley, I'm proud you're here. Zell and I both married above ourselves. [*Laughter*] I regret that Laura hasn't joined us. She is a fabulous First Lady for this country. I'm really proud of her.

And I'm proud as well of the junior Senator from the great State of Georgia, a close ally, good friend, good, honorable man, Saxby Chambliss.

I better make sure I mention Mary Perdue as well, the first lady of the great State of Georgia. Governor, I appreciate what you're doing at the statehouse here.

I'm proud of my friend Jamie Reynolds. I appreciate the team he has put together to help make this an incredibly successful fundraiser. Don't go overboard on Jamie. He's not bad for a country boy. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate the members of the congressional delegation who are here: Mac Collins and Nathan Deal, Charlie Norwood, Phil Gingrey, and Max Burns. These are good ones, good, honorable citizens who are doing what they think is right for the country. I appreciate you all coming.

I know my friend Nancy Coverdale is here. She is just a great personal friend of our family's. Nancy, thank you for taking time out of your schedule to be here.

I'm honored that my friend Mercer Reynolds—happens to be related to Jamie—he's the national finance chairman for Bush-Cheney—is here. It's important to make sure that you've got plenty of cash on hand when you're running for President. You want to be well-financed. We're becoming well-financed. We've got a great national effort, a great Georgia effort. And again, I want to thank you all you all for participating in this.

Ralph Reed is with us. He's the Southeast regional chairman and he's the Georgia chairman for my campaign, for the campaign of Vice President Cheney. Alec Poitevint is with us as well, who's the party chairman.

And for the grassroots activists who are here, I want to thank you for what you're going to do. Thank you for the work that

you're going to do as we're coming down the stretch. That's the work that's putting up the signs and talking the talk, getting on the phone, and addressing the envelopes. I appreciate what you're going to do. You cannot win a campaign unless hard-working grassroots people get out there and pound the pavement on behalf of this ticket. And I can assure you, we'll be right with you.

And when you're out there, I want you to remind everybody that for the last 3 years, our Nation has acted decisively to confront great challenges. I came to this office to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. I came to seize opportunities instead of letting them slip away. My administration is meeting the tests of our time.

Terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got. We have captured or killed many of the key leaders of the Al Qaida network, and the rest of them know that we are on their trail. In Afghanistan and in Iraq, we gave ultimatums to terror regimes. Those regimes chose defiance, and those regimes are no more. Fifty million people in those two countries once lived under tyranny, and today, they live in freedom.

Three years ago, our military was not receiving the resources it needed, and morale was beginning to suffer. So we increased the defense budgets to prepare for the threats of a new era. And today, no one in the world can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

Three years ago, the economy was in trouble, and the recession was just beginning. And then there was attacks on our country and scandals in corporate America and war, which all affected the people's confidence. But this administration acted. We passed tough new laws to hold corporate criminals to account. And to get the economy going again, I have twice led the United States Congress to pass historic tax relief for the American people.

We understand that when Americans have more take-home pay to spend, to save, or to invest, the whole economy grows, and people are more likely to find a job. So we're returning more money to the people to help them raise their families, reducing taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage investment. We've given small businesses incentives to expand and to hire new people. With all these actions, we are laying the foundation for greater prosperity and more jobs, so every single citizen in this country has a chance to realize the American Dream.

Today, the American economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. The figures for the third quarter of 2003 show the economy grew at an annual rate of 8.2 percent, the fastest pace in nearly 20 years. Productivity is high. Business investment is rising. Housing construction is expanding. Manufacturing activity is increasing, and we've added over a quarter-million new jobs over the past 5 months. The tax relief we passed is working.

Three years ago, there was a lot of talk about education reform in Washington, but there just wasn't much action. So I acted. I called for and the Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act. With a solid bipartisan majority, we delivered the most dramatic education reforms in a generation. We've increased spending at the Federal level, particularly for Title I students, for poor students. But for the first time, the Federal Government is saying, "Why don't you show us whether or not the children can read and write and add and subtract." The reason why we're saying that is because we believe every child, regardless of their background, can learn to read and write and add and subtract. We expect every school to teach every child to read and write and add and subtract. This administration is challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. We expect results so that not one single child is left behind in America.

We reorganized our Government and created the Department of Homeland Security to better safeguard our borders and ports and to protect the American people. We passed trade promotion authority to open up new markets for Georgia's farmers and ranchers and entrepreneurs and manufacturers. We passed much-needed budget agreements to help maintain spending discipline in Washington, DC. And last month, we completed the greatest advance in health care coverage for America's seniors since the founding of Medicare. The new Medicare bill that I signed will give older Americans the option

of a prescription drug benefit and more control over their health care. America's seniors deserve a modern health care system, and this administration delivered.

On issue after issue—on issue after issue—this administration has acted on principle, has kept its word, and has made progress for the American people. And the Congress deserves a lot of credit. I enjoy working with Speaker Denny Hastert, Majority Leader Bill Frist. I enjoy working with Senator Miller and Chambliss and working with this Georgia congressional delegation. We're working hard to change the tone in Washington, DC. There's too much needless politics up there. There's too much backbiting and backstabbing. The best way to fight through that noise is to focus on results, to do what I call the people's business, and get some things done. And we're getting a lot done.

We're also getting a lot done because I've surrounded myself with plenty capable people, good, honorable, decent people from all walks of life who have come to serve in my administration with one thing in mind, to represent the greatest country on the face of the Earth. Our country has had no finer Vice President than Dick Cheney. Mother may have a second opinion. [*Laughter*]

In 3 years, we've done a lot. We have come far, but our work is only beginning. I have set great goals worthy of a great nation. First, America is committed to expanding the realm of freedom and peace for our own security and for the benefit of the world. And second, in our own country, we must work for a society that is prosperous and compassionate so every citizen has a chance to work and to succeed and to realize the great promise of America.

It is clear that the future of freedom and peace depend on the actions of America. We are freedom's home and freedom's defender. We welcome this charge of history, and we are keeping it. The war on terror continues. The enemies of freedom are not idle, and neither are we. This country will not rest; we will not tire; we will not stop until this danger to civilization is removed.

We are confronting that danger in Iraq, where all people can be certain they will never again have to fear the rule of Saddam Hussein. The Ba'athist holdouts largely responsible for the current violence now know there will be no return to corrupt power and the privilege they once held. All Iraqis who have taken the side of freedom have taken the winning side.

We still face terrorists who would rather go on killing the innocent than accept the rise of liberty in the Middle East. You see, they know that the advance of freedom in Iraq would be a major defeat for the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake the will of the United States of America. America will never be intimidated by a bunch of thugs and assassins.

We are aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we do not have to face them in our own country. Other nations are helping to build a free Iraq because they understand a free and peaceful Iraq in the heart of the Middle East will make us all more secure. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume more of their own defense and move toward self-government. These are not easy tasks, but they're essential tasks. We will finish what we have begun, and we will win this essential victory in the war on terror.

And part of winning the war on terror is to oppose proliferation around the world. Last month, after talks with the United States and Great Britain, Libya voluntarily committed to disclose and dismantle all its weapons of mass destruction programs. Leaders around the world now know this: Weapons of mass destruction do not bring influence or prestige; they bring isolation and other unwelcome consequences. [*Laughter*] And nations who abandon the pursuit of these weapons will find an open path to better relations with the United States of America.

Our greatest security comes from the advance of human liberty, because free nations do not support terror, free nations do not attack their neighbors, free nations do not threaten the world with weapons of mass destruction. Americans believe that freedom is the deepest need and hope of every human heart. I believe that freedom is the future of every nation. And we know that freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is the Almighty God's gift to every man and woman in this world.

America also understands that unprecedented influence brings tremendous responsibilities. We have duties in this world, and when we see disease, starvation, and hopeless poverty, we will not turn away. On the continent of Africa, this great, mighty land is committed to bringing the healing power of medicine to millions of men and women and children now suffering with AIDS. This great country of ours is leading the world in this incredibly important work of human rescue.

We face challenges here at home as well, and our actions will prove that we're equal to these challenges. This administration will continue to promote a pro-growth, pro-small business, pro-entrepreneur economic agenda until everyone who wants to work can find a job.

And for the sake of our health care system, we need to cut down on the frivolous lawsuits which are driving up the cost of medicine. People who have been harmed by a bad doc deserve their day in court. Yet the system should not reward lawyers who are simply fishing for a rich settlement. Frivolous lawsuits drive up the cost of health care, and they therefore affect the Federal budget. Medical liability reform is a national issue that requires a national solution.

The House of Representatives passed a good bill. The bill is stuck in the United States Senate. Senators Miller and Chambliss are working to get it unstuck. The Senate must act on behalf of the American people. Some of those Senators must understand that no one has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit in America.

I have a responsibility as your President to make sure the judicial system runs well, and I met that duty. I have nominated superb men and women for the Federal courts, people who will interpret the law, not legislate from the bench. Yet some Members, some Members of the Senate, are trying to keep my nominees off the bench by blocking up-or-down votes. Every judicial nominee deserves a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. I appreciate Senator Miller and Senator Chambliss' strong support for the nominees I've nominated. It's time for some of the Members of the United States Senate to stop playing politics with American justice.

This country needs an energy plan, and Congress needs to complete the work on that bill and get it to my desk. We must promote energy efficiency and conservation and to develop cleaner technologies to help us explore in environmentally friendly ways. But for the sake of economic security and for the sake of national security, we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

A strong and prosperous nation must also be a compassionate nation. I will continue to advance our agenda of compassionate conservatism, which means we'll apply the best and most innovative ideas to the task of helping fellow citizens in need. We need—there are millions of men and women in this country who want to end their dependence on government and become independent through hard work. We must build on the success of welfare reform, put good job-training programs in place that help people find work that actually exists, so that more people can have work and dignity in their lives.

With the help of Congress, we're working to ensure that more Americans can serve their communities and their country through what's called the Citizen Service Program. Both Houses of the United States Congress must pass my Faith-Based Initiative. It is essential that our Government not fear the influence of faith in our society but welcome people of faith into serving the difficult problems of heart, the difficult problems of the homeless, the addiction, mentoring of children. Faith is one of the great strengths of America, and our Government must welcome faith-based programs.

A compassionate society must promote opportunity for every single citizen, including the independence and dignity that come from ownership. This administration will constantly strive to promote an ownership society in America. We want more people owning their own home. In our country today, we have a minority homeownership gap, and that's not good for America. I have put forth plans, have worked with Senator Miller and Senator Chambliss to close this gap. We're working hard to encourage more people in America to own their own home. We want more people owning their own health care plans and managing their health care plans. We want people owning and managing their

own retirement accounts. We want more people owning their own small business, because we understand that when a person owns something, he or she has a vital stake in the future of America.

A compassionate society is one in which people respect one another, respect their religious views, respect their backgrounds, and take responsibility for the decisions they make in life. The culture of this country is changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands that we are responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you are fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're worried about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you are responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in this new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

We can see that culture of service and responsibility growing around us. I went to a church in downtown New Orleans today that was full of neighborhood healers, people who have heard the universal call, people from all walks of life, different religions, all aimed at serving our Nation by helping somebody who hurts.

I started what's called the USA Freedom Corps to encourage Americans to extend a compassionate hand to a neighbor in need, and the response has been fantastic. The strength of this country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. Policemen and firefighters and people who wear our Nation's uniform remind us what it means to sacrifice for something greater than ourselves in life. Once again, the children of this country believe in heroes, because they see them every day.

In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of America. And I've been privileged to see the compassion and the character of the American people. All the tests of the last 3 years have come to the right nation.

We're a strong country, and we use that strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves. Abroad, we seek to lift whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it and know that for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you all. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. at the Georgia World Congress Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Sonny Perdue of Georgia; Alec Poitevint, chairman, Georgia Republican Party; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. He also referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103–382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89–10).

Proclamation 7752—National Sanctity of Human Life Day, 2004

January 15, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As Americans, we are led by the power of our conscience and the history of our country to defend and promote the dignity and rights of all people. Each person, however frail or defenseless, has a place and a purpose in this world. On National Sanctity of Human Life Day, we celebrate the gift of life and our commitment to building a society of compassion and humanity.

Today, the principles of human dignity enshrined in the Declaration of Independence—that all persons are created equal and possess the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—continue to guide us. In November, I signed into law the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003, reaffirming our commitment to protecting innocent life and to a basic standard of humanity—the duty of the strong to defend the weak. My Administration encourages adoption and supports abstinence education, crisis pregnancy programs, parental notification laws, and other measures to help us continue

to build a culture of life. By working together, we will provide hope to the weakest among us and achieve a more compassionate and merciful world.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Sunday, January 18, 2004, as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. I call upon all Americans to recognize this day with appropriate ceremonies in our homes and places of worship and to reaffirm our commitment to respecting the life and dignity of every human being.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:38 a.m., January 16, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 16, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 20.

Executive Order 13324—Termination of Emergency With Respect to Sierra Leone and Liberia

January 15, 2004

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*) (NEA), and section 5 of the United Nations Participation Act of 1945, as amended (22 U.S.C. 287c),

I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, find that the situations that gave rise to the declaration of a national emergency in Executive Order 13194 of January 18, 2001, with respect to Sierra Leone and the expansion of the scope of that emergency in Executive Order 13213 of May 22, 2001, with respect to Liberia, have been significantly altered given that in January 2002 the Government of Sierra Leone, the Sierra Leonean rebel group Revolutionary United Front (RUF), and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone declared the war in Sierra Leone to have ended; the parties to the Liberian civil war entered into a Comprehensive Peace Agreement in August 2003; the RUF no longer exists as a military organization; Charles Taylor, who was the prime instigator of violence both in Sierra Leone and in Liberia, has resigned from the Liberian presidency and gone into exile; the Government of Sierra Leone has established a rough diamond certification regime that meets the minimum standards of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme; and the United States has implemented the Clean Diamond Trade Act (Public Law 108–19), prohibiting the importation into the United States of rough diamonds that are not controlled through the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, currently including rough diamonds from Liberia. Accordingly, I hereby terminate the national emergency declared and expanded in scope in those two prior orders, revoke those orders, and further order:

Section 1. Pursuant to section 202 of the NEA (50 U.S.C. 1622), termination of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13194 and expanded in scope in Executive Order 13213 shall not affect any action taken or proceeding pending not finally concluded or determined as of the effective date of this order, or any action or proceeding based on any act committed prior to such date, or any rights or duties that matured or penalties that were incurred prior to such date.

Sec. 2. This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

Sec. 3. This order is effective at 12:01 a.m. eastern standard time on January 16, 2004. This order shall be transmitted to the Congress and published in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

The White House,
January 15, 2004.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:38 a.m., January 16, 2004]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 16, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 20.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Termination of Emergency With Respect to Sierra Leone and Liberia

January 15, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with section 202(a) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622, I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order on January 15, 2004, that terminates the national emergency described and declared with respect to Sierra Leone in Executive Order 13194 of January 18, 2001, and expanded in scope with respect to Liberia by Executive Order 13213 of May 22, 2001.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order. This order becomes effective at 12:01 a.m. eastern standard time on January 16, 2004.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 16.

Proclamation 7753—Religious Freedom Day, 2004

January 16, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America is a land of many faiths, and the right to religious freedom is a foundation of our Nation. On Religious Freedom Day, Americans acknowledge the centrality of their faith and reaffirm that the great strength of our country is the heart and soul of our citizens.

Religious Freedom Day celebrates the passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom on January 16, 1786. Thomas Jefferson, drafter of the legislation, considered it one of his three greatest accomplishments, along with writing the Declaration of Independence and founding the University of Virginia. Recognizing the importance of faith to our people, our Founding Fathers guaranteed religious freedom in the Constitution.

Protecting our religious freedom requires the vigilance of the American people and of government at all levels. Within my Administration, the Department of Justice is acting to protect religious freedom, including prosecuting those who attack people or places of worship because of religious affiliation. The Department of Education has issued new guidelines that allow students to engage in constitutionally protected religious activity in public schools. These guidelines protect, for example, students' rights to say a prayer before meals in the cafeteria, to gather with other students before school to pray, and to engage in other expressions of personal faith.

Through my Faith-Based and Community Initiative, my Administration continues to encourage the essential work of faith-based and community organizations. Governments can and should support effective social services, including those provided by religious people and organizations. When government gives that support, it is important that faith-based institutions not be forced to change their religious character. In December 2002, I signed an Executive Order to end discrimination against faith-based organizations in the Federal grants process. In September 2003, in implementing this order, my Administration eliminated many of the barriers that have kept faith-based charities from partnering with the Federal Government to help Americans in need. Six Federal agencies have proposed or finalized new regulations to ensure that no organization or beneficiary will be discriminated against in a Federally funded social service program on the basis of religion.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 16, 2004,

as Religious Freedom Day. I urge all Americans to reflect on the blessings of our religious freedom and to observe this day through appropriate events and activities in homes, schools, and places of worship.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:57 a.m., January 20, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 21.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

January 10

In the morning, at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, the President had an intelligence briefing.

January 12

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Monterrey, Mexico, to attend the Special Summit of the Americas. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a briefing on the summit.

In the afternoon, at the InterContinental Hotel in Monterrey, the President met briefly with Caribbean leaders. Later, he and Mrs. Bush participated in a greeting with U.S. Mission employees.

Later in the afternoon, at the Parque Fundidora, the President participated in summit meetings.

In the evening, the President met with President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil at the Parque Fundidora. Later, he and Mrs. Bush attended a dinner hosted by President Vicente Fox of Mexico at the Palacio de Gobierno.

The President announced his designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the inauguration of Oscar Berger Perdomo as President of Guatemala on January 14: Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida (head of delegation); John R. Hamilton, U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala; Columba Bush; Hamilton E. James; Bob Martinez; and Alberto M. Piedra.

January 13

In the morning, at the InterContinental Hotel, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, at the Parque Fundidora, he participated in summit meetings and then met with President Nestor Kirchner of Argentina.

In the afternoon, at the Parque Fundidora, the President participated in summit meetings and then met with President Carlos Diego Mesa Gisbert of Bolivia. Later, he participated in an official photograph followed by a lunch retreat with heads of state.

During the day, the President had a brief discussion with President Mireya Elisa Moscoso of Panama.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint William Henry Campbell, Jr., as a member of the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

The President declared a major disaster in California and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by an earthquake on December 22, 2003, and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in American Samoa and ordered Federal aid to supplement Territory and local recovery efforts in the area struck by high winds, high surf, and heavy rainfall associated with Tropical Cyclone Heta on January 2–6, 2004.

January 14

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had separate meetings with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin L. Powell.

In the afternoon, the President attended a Republican National Committee luncheon at the historic Evermay house in northwest Washington, DC. Later, at National Aeronautics and Space Administration headquarters, he met with current and former astronauts.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush had dinner with President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain and his wife, Ana Botella de Aznar.

January 15

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to New Orleans, LA, where, upon arrival, he greeted USA Freedom Corps volunteer Tenisha Stevens. Later, at the Union Bethel AME Church, he visited with parishioners and participated in a roundtable discussion with faith-based and community leaders.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Atlanta, GA, where, upon arrival, he greeted USA Freedom Corps volunteer Billiee Pendleton-Parker. Later, at the King Center, he participated in a wreath-laying ceremony at the gravesite of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., with Dr. King's widow, Coretta Scott King, and other King family members.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to designate Patrick Pizzella as a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

January 16

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President met with L. Paul Bremer III, Presidential Envoy to Iraq. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Camp David, MD.

The White House announced that the President and Mrs. Bush will welcome President Vicente Fox of Mexico and Mrs. Fox to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, on March 5–6.

The President announced his intention to designate Linda Richey Graves as Chairman of the Commission on Presidential Scholars.

The President announced his intention to appoint Tony B. Gelbart and Harry Reicher as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Advisory Commission on Drug-Free Communities: Kenneth L. Barun, Arthur Dean, Dennis Griffith, and Tracy Mueller.

The President declared an emergency in Connecticut and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by record/near record snow on December 5–7, 2003.

The President declared an emergency in Maine and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by record/near record snow on December 5–7, 2003.

The President declared an emergency in Massachusetts and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by record/near record snow on December 6–7, 2003.

The President declared an emergency in New Hampshire and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by record/near record snow on December 6–7, 2003.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released January 10

Fact sheet: President Bush Urges Congress To Make Tax Cuts Permanent

Released January 12

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Released January 13

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to American Samoa

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to California

Fact sheet: U.S. Accomplishments at the Special Summit of the Americas

Fact sheet: Lowering the Cost of Remittances

Released January 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Transcript of a press briefing by National Aeronautics and Space Administration Administrator Sean O'Keefe on the President's new goals for the space program

Fact sheet: A Renewed Spirit of Discovery

Released January 15

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Fact sheet: Progress in Helping Americans Most in Need Through Faith-based and Community Initiatives

Released January 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Vicente Fox of Mexico to Crawford

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Connecticut

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Maine

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Massachusetts

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to New Hampshire

Acts Approved by the President

NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.

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